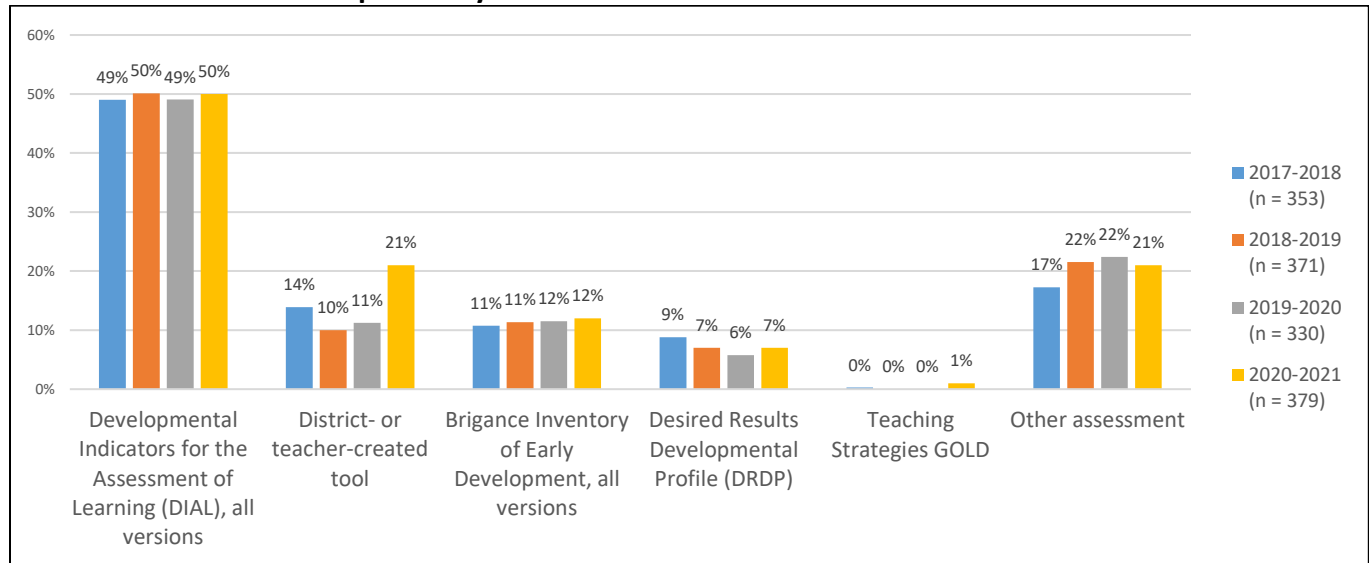


Summary of Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) Activities

Revised March 2022

Prior to 2021, the Department recommended the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) as the school readiness tool to assess the skills and behaviors of preschoolers. A review of data collected from schools indicated most schools were not using this recommended tool.

School Readiness Tools Reported by Schools in 2017-18 to 2020-21



A closer look at these data revealed few schools reported using the DRDP and most schools reported using the DIAL as the measure of school readiness; however, the DIAL is a developmental screening tool and not designed to measure school readiness.

November 2020: School Readiness Stakeholder Group

Approximately 45 professionals were identified to form a stakeholder group to discuss school readiness data and next steps for collecting school readiness information. The group was comprised of 30 teachers and leaders, eight higher education staff, and seven state staff. Schools represented in the stakeholder group included:

Area	Schools
Northwest	St. Joseph, Nodaway County
Northeast	Kirksville, Scotland County
Central	North Callaway, Fulton, Columbia, Wardsville
Kansas City	Independence, Center, Belton, Lafayette
St. Louis	Normandy, Bayless, Valley Park, St. Louis Public
Southwest	Joplin, Springfield, Marionville, West Plains, Branson
South Central	Rolla, Meramec Valley
Southeast	Dexter, Jackson, Kennett

December 2020 to February 2021: Screening versus Assessment Discussions

Within the first few meetings, the stakeholder group quickly realized the need to better define screening versus assessment, and the distinction between the purpose and properties of each. The group developed a chart to compare/contrast the core components of each, which included the following:

Topic	Developmental Screening	Kindergarten Entry Assessment
Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief • Inexpensive tools • Provides a snapshot of children's abilities • Norm-referenced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth • Usually cost more than screening tools • Provides a description of children's abilities • Usually criterion-referenced
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To determine if further diagnostic assessment is needed • To provide supportive information for professionals and families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To inform instruction • To inform families of their children's development • To inform policy at district and state levels
Targeted population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children birth to kindergarten entry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children enrolled in kindergarten
Access considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to reach children who are not screened by home visiting/parent education programs, and/or do not attend preschool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to reach children who are not enrolled in public schools
When administered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administered at least annually birth to five 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning of kindergarten (first 6-8 weeks, depending on tool chosen)
Who administers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent educators, home visitors, child care providers, preschool teachers, healthcare providers, ECSE teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kindergarten teachers or primary teachers in the case of children with IEPs
Domains measured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief measure of all domains, may have to use several tools to address all domains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth measure of all domains using one tool
Results reported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall development compared to same-age children • Development in specific domains compared to same-age children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall kindergarten readiness • Readiness in specific domains
Single vs. multiple tool approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple tools are already approved for PAT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Menu approach (multiple tools) allows schools already using an appropriate KEA tool to continue doing so
Examples of tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ages & Stages Questionnaires, Third Edition (ASQ-3) • Ages & Stages Questionnaires: Social-Emotional, Second Edition (ASQ: SE-2) • Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning-4th Ed. (DIAL-4) • The Devereux Early Childhood Assessment for Infants (DECA-I) • The Devereux Early Childhood Assessment for Toddlers (DECA-T) • The Devereux Early Childhood Assessment for Preschoolers, 2nd Edition (DECA-P2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kindergarten Observation Form (KOF) • Desired Results Developmental Profile-Kindergarten Essential (DRDP-K Essential) • Brigance Inventory of Early Development III Standardized (IED III Standardized)
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase availability of screenings, the state should offer training for the selected tool(s) to a variety of early childhood professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training is critical to ensure reliability and validity, particularly for observation-based measures • To lower costs, the state should work with publishers to gain access to recorded and virtual trainings for the selected tool(s)
State-level reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to work with home visiting/parent education programs to collect screening information • Stored in a program-level system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to work with kindergarten teachers to collect KEA information • Stored in the MOSIS K-12 student record
State-level considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggregating data from multiple tools may be tricky 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggregating data from multiple tools may be tricky

Group discussions, particularly around **access** to all children, generated a two-pronged strategy to support school readiness activities **before and after** kindergarten entry that:

1. Build on the current birth to five screening activities to ensure that all children are screened at least once a year; and,
2. Adopt a comprehensive, multi-domain kindergarten entry assessment (KEA) to be used at kindergarten entry.

Lessons Learned

Stakeholders discussed lessons learned from the current school readiness assessment activities (e.g., what's working, what's not working) and came up with four critical lessons:

1. Administer the tool quickly (within the first few weeks). Otherwise you are no longer assessing readiness; you are assessing the learning a child has made in the first 6-8 weeks of kindergarten, which may produce invalid readiness data.
2. Consider one-time, low-cost assessments that can be easily aligned to other assessment tools that schools may use in kindergarten.
3. Produce useful information that can inform teacher's instruction and align to the early learning standards, so it is meaningful to the teacher and the parent, and not just one more thing that teachers have to do.
4. Consider training that is easy to access and no-cost to the school, including virtual training that new teachers can access quickly.

March 2021: Kindergarten Observation Form (KOF)

During stakeholder meeting discussions, the group learned of a tool, the Kindergarten Observation Form (KOF), used in the Independence school district and surrounding schools. Stakeholders liked the idea of looking at a readiness tool that a school was already using in Missouri, and one that meets the four lessons learned listed above. The stakeholders also appreciated the immediate reporting, from child to classroom level, available to teachers for use in planning instruction. Note: the KOF does not necessarily replace other assessments used in kindergarten, rather it provides a baseline of readiness skills and behaviors that may be aligned to other formative assessments as needed.

March through October 2021: Initial Implementation of KOF Pilot

During stakeholder meeting discussions, the group expressed a desire to pilot the KOF in the upcoming school year. In June 2021, DESE held a KEA orientation webinar for all teachers, leaders, and other school staff interested in the KOF pilot. The webinar summarized the key points and discussions from stakeholder meetings.

- In August 2021, DESE provided virtual training for approximately 100 kindergarten teachers and school leaders/staff to learn more about the KOF. The training duration was approximately two hours. The training was paid for by the state Preschool Development Grant and provided at no-cost to the school.
- In September and October 2021, teachers administered the KOF for students entering kindergarten and reported the data in the October cycle of DESE student data.

November 2021: Stakeholder Meeting and Survey

The stakeholder group reconvened to share experiences and collect feedback on the virtual training and administration of the KOF. A survey requesting feedback was sent to all pilot participants. Overall feedback was positive. The participants appreciated having virtual training available at no-cost. A few teachers who already used a kindergarten assessment felt the KOF duplicated some of the data they collected. Results from the pilot indicated 58% of 849 children assessed were ready for school, overall. Mean scores were generally higher in the Physical Development domain and lower in the Language and Literacy domain.

March 2022: Scale-up the KOF Pilot

The Office of Childhood completed plans to scale-up the KEA pilot and opened registration for additional kindergarten teachers to participate in using the KOF for school year 2022-23.

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